

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

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State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Unemployment Continues to Rise in October

The unemployment rate in the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan area in October was 4.7 percent, seasonally adjusted. According to the estimates released by the Department of Workforce Development, the current rate in the metro area is higher than the 4.3 percent rate in September and higher than the 3.1 percent rate last October. The local unemployment rate is also higher than the state of Wisconsin seasonally adjusted rate of 4.5 percent, and higher than the metro unemployment rate of 3.5 percent, not seasonally adjusted. The estimates also show an increase in October in the West Central region rate to 3.6 percent from 3.2 in September, not seasonally adjusted.

Both state and national unemployment rates increased by half a percentage point in October as the number of unemployed rose. The Eau Claire metro rate, and the West Central regional rate, rose by four tenths of a percent. In both areas, the reason for the higher rate was also an increase in the number of unemployed residents.

Unemployment rates in each of the seven non-metropolitan counties also rose in October. The largest increase was in St. Croix County where the rate increased eight tenths of a percentage point from 2.8 percent in September to 3.6 percent in October. The smallest increase was in Dunn County where the rate rose from 2.7 to 2.8 percent. In Clark and Pepin counties the rate rose two percentage points to 4.4 and 3.3 percent, respectively. In Polk, the rate increased from 3.5 to 3.9 percent, in Pierce it rose from 2.5 to 3.0 percent, and in Barron it increased from 2.9 to 3.6 percent.

The number of unemployed, seasonally adjusted, in Eau Claire and Chippewa counties rose from 3,700 in September to over 4,000 in October. An increase of that magnitude is unusual in October, a month when the number of unemployed is more likely to decline, not increase. The higher level of unemployed is a reflection of the increase in the number of residents filing claims for unemployment bene-

fits. In mid-October there were 1,556 claims submitted for benefits, nearly double the number for the same week one year earlier.

The estimate of unemployed in the West Central region increased from 7,300 in September to 8,370 in October. That is also a larger than normal increase for October but follows on the heels of a larger than normal decline in September. The number of residents in the non-MSA counties of the region who filed a claim for unemployment benefits actually declined by 100 from September to 1,560 in October. That is 1.5 times greater than one year ago. While higher than in previous years, the count of residents filing unemployment claims in the non-metro counties conforms to the same pattern it generally follows. This is not the case in the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan area. There the weekly claim counts have been up and down, but have been generally increasing, instead of declining, since early summer.

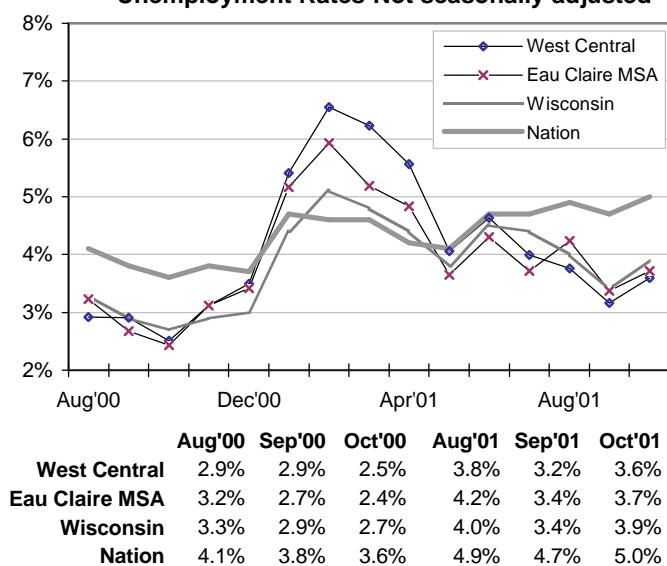
Why didn't the unemployment rate in the metro area increase even more if there were nearly twice as many claims for unemployment benefits? Because the number of residents with jobs is also higher than one year ago.

There were 200 more residents employed in October than in September and 2,400 more than one year ago. The increase in unemployment and most of the area's unemployment claims are from lay offs by manufacturers. The increase in jobs is occurring with others employers.

The number of jobs with employers in the metro area increased by 1,200 in October but most of that increase occurred in government as workers continued to return to jobs at local and state schools. Government employment increased by 800 in October. The number of jobs

in retail trade, services and transportation also increased primarily in response to the influx of students. Any downturn in the local economy is still centered on manufacturing. Since last October, the area has lost nearly 1,000 production jobs; but as of October no other industries were

Unemployment Rates-Not seasonally adjusted



reporting major reductions in jobs. Manufacturing employers provide 15 percent of the jobs in Eau Claire and Chippewa counties but the income from those jobs is spent in the area, which leads to jobs in other industries.

Manufacturers in the non-MSA counties also laid off workers in October, but in these counties the reductions were primarily from seasonal declines in food processing jobs. The two counties most effected were Barron and St. Croix. Manufacturing employers in the seven non-metropolitan counties provide roughly 25 percent of the jobs in the region.

The increase in government employment occurred throughout the West Central region but to a greater degree in counties with post-secondary schools. In Dunn County the number of jobs increased by 1,100 in October and in Pierce County there was an increase of 300 jobs.

Overall, employers in the non-metropolitan counties added over 1,000 jobs in October, but most of those jobs were recalls to vacated positions. Very few were the result of new openings.

October Estimates	Wisconsin	EC MSA	Barron	Clark	Dunn	Pepin	Pierce	Polk	St.Croix
Civilian Labor Force*	3,050,800	85,700	24,600	16,400	23,000	3,300	21,300	23,800	34,900
Employed	2,932,500	82,600	23,700	15,700	22,400	3,200	20,700	22,900	33,700
Unemployed	118,300	3,200	900	700	700	100	600	900	1,300
Unemployment rate(%)	3.9%	3.7%	3.6%	4.4%	2.8%	3.3%	3.0%	3.9%	3.6%
Total jobs, all industries**	2,862,900	78,800	22,200	10,200	16,200	2,300	11,400	15,600	27,800
Construction & Mining	136,470	4,220	960	590	920	180	530	1,110	1,750
Manufacturing	585,840	11,520	6,850	3,310	2,040	170	1,420	4,680	6,970
Transportation & Public Util.	137,170	3,870	690	410	510	120	500	500	1,140
Wholesale Trade	137,320	3,310	570	590	660	280	300	350	610
Retail Trade	504,350	19,080	4,290	1,370	4,510	490	2,310	2,810	6,050
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	152,800	3,090	400	230	440	70	330	480	850
Services	788,530	21,020	3,880	1,600	2,740	410	2,210	3,050	6,510
Government	420,420	12,690	4,590	2,080	4,330	550	3,830	2,630	3,900
Change from previous month									
Civilian Labor Force*	12,600	1,300	-100	-200	1,300	0	0	0	100
Employed	-2,500	1,000	-200	-200	1,200	0	-100	-100	-200
Unemployed	15,100	300	200	0	100	0	100	100	300
Unemployment rate(%)	0.5%	0.3%	0.6%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.5%	0.4%	0.8%
Total jobs, all industries**	7,600	1,200	-100	0	1,100	0	300	0	-200
Construction & Mining	-1,200	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	-5,260	-40	-160	0	0	0	0	70	-270
Transportation & Public Util.	470	70	20	-10	10	0	-10	-10	30
Wholesale Trade	-210	0	10	0	10	0	0	0	20
Retail Trade	2,190	250	10	10	80	10	40	-80	20
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	340	20	0	0	0	0	0	-10	30
Services	-2,800	140	-50	10	0	-10	-30	-10	-120
Government	14,120	810	120	-20	960	20	290	10	110
Change from one year ago									
Civilian Labor Force*	79,100	2,700	500	500	400	100	400	1,100	900
Employed	42,400	1,600	600	300	200	100	100	800	200
Unemployed	36,600	1,200	-100	100	200	0	200	300	700
Unemployment rate(%)	1.1%	1.3%	-0.3%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%	1.1%	1.2%	1.9%
Total jobs, all industries**	-3,700	600	200	0	-100	0	200	400	700
Construction & Mining	-2,000	700	0	100	100	0	0	100	200
Manufacturing	-29,820	-960	-20	30	-120	10	50	80	-60
Transportation & Public Util.	-50	80	20	30	10	-10	-30	0	-50
Wholesale Trade	-2,850	140	0	-20	-20	0	20	-10	20
Retail Trade	1,690	430	-10	-10	30	10	80	30	290
Finance,Insurance,Real Estate	3,450	380	-20	-20	20	0	10	10	50
Services	13,690	-250	210	0	30	0	40	70	180
Government	12,250	160	70	-30	-120	0	20	110	160

* Includes participants residing in area. ** Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

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